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ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Inclusion of activities of non-governmental organizations within the official programme of work

Argentina: draft decision

The Conference of the Parties,

Recognizing the spirit of partnership set out in the third principle of the Convention to Combat Desertification, which states that:

"the Parties should develop, in a spirit of partnership, cooperation among all levels of government, communities, non-governmental organizations and landholders to establish a better understanding of the nature and value of land and scarce water resources in affected areas to work towards their sustainable use",

Recalling that this principle is carried forward in the action focused sections of the Convention dealing with participation in planning and decision-making, funding, information and technology and capacity building, education and public awareness,

Noting that Article 10 of the Convention stipulates that National Action Programmes shall provide for effective participation of non-governmental organizations and local populations in all stages of the planning process and at all levels of decision-making

Recognizing that in Article 21.1 (c) it is stipulated that "the Conference of the Parties shall consider for adoption, inter alia, approaches and policies that facilitate, as appropriate, mechanisms such as national

desertification funds, including those involving the participation of non-governmental organizations, to channel financial resources rapidly and efficiently to the local level in affected developing country Parties",

Noting also that in Articles 16 (Information) and 18 (Technology) it is recognized that NGOs have access to important information; that they have built up relevant expertise and that they have developed channels to reach out to the target groups so that governments have agreed that they will engage in partnerships with NGOs to make full use of their expertise in the areas of information dissemination (Article 16) and the promotion of appropriate technology (Article 18.1), in particular technology that is based on traditional and local knowledge (Article 18.2 (a)),

Recognizing also that NGOs will have a major role in informing people at the community level and mobilizing community action. Therefore capacity building, education and public awareness are other areas in which partnership arrangements between governments and NGOs are essential,

1. Requests that additional open dialogue sessions organized by NGOs occur within the official programme of work of future sessions of the Conference of the Parties and that the Secretariat make all efforts to facilitate inclusion of at least two half-day NGO sessions within the official programme of work;

2. Requests also that NGOs give further consideration to institutional mechanisms for reinforcing partnerships, north-south partnerships, relationships with multilateral agencies, research institutions and funding mechanisms, and partnerships at the community level, which draw on local knowledge and experience, gender issues in partnership building and other critical issues in the implementation of the CCD.